

THE NEW DAGUERREIAN JOURNAL:

Devoted to the Daguerreian and Photogenic Art
Also embracing the Sciences, Arts, and Literature



Daguerre



Mrs Delos Terry
(Harriet Baldwin
son Milton (deceased))



The New Daguerreian Journal

July, 1974

Volume 2 Number 4

Executive Editor

Walter A. Johnson, Photographic
Historian, Dept. of Photography
& Cinema, Ohio State University

Contributing Editors

Floyd & Marion Rinhart
Edward Lentz
Cliff Krainik
Robert W. Wagner
Donald P. Lokuta

Publisher

The Publications Committee of
The Ohio State University Libraries

*Send all correspondence and editorial matter to the
Executive Editor: Walter A. Johnson, The Daguer-
rean Society, Inc., 1360 Haines Avenue, Columbus,
Ohio 43212*

*Mail subscription orders to the Publisher: Publications
Committee, The Ohio State University Libraries,
1858 Neil Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210*

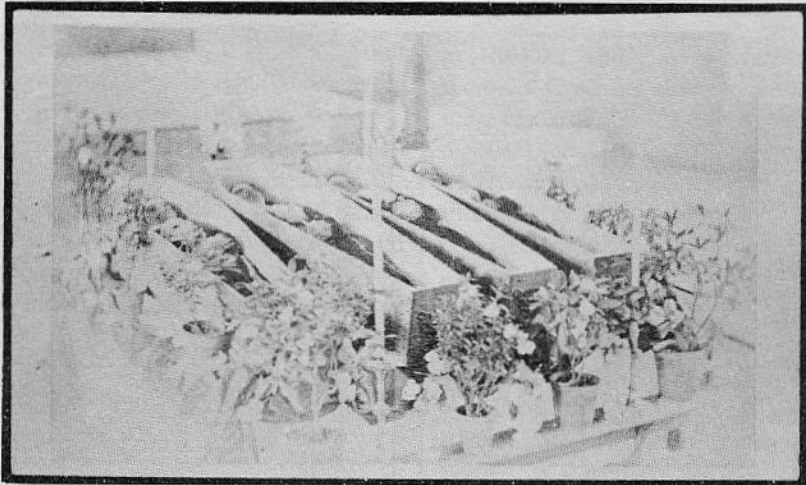
*Copyrighted July, 1974, by Walter A. Johnson and
the Daguerrean Society, 1360 Haines Ave., Columbus,
Ohio 43212. All rights reserved.*



2

CONTENTS

"Some Aspects of Nineteenth Century American Post-mortem Photography" by Kent Bowser	page 4
"A New Kind of Pictorial History" by Paul W. Rea	page 6
"How to Know the True State of our Souls: and whether we are fit to die"	page 7
"The Life Clock"	page 8
"Victorian Death Image"	page 9
"The Child's Dream" by James Baldy	page 18
"Kiss Me, Mamma"	page 19
"Premature Burial"	page 20



3

SOME ASPECTS OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN POST MORTUM PHOTOGRAPHY

Kent Bowser

While going through collections of daguerreotypes or, in fact, collections of nineteenth-century images from daguerreotypes through paper prints, one comes across powerful images of the dead. These persistently preserved images of both young and old were ordinary records of the most ordinary of events, which now through the time-machine aspects of the vehicle of photography have been changed into arcane remnants and obscure relics. These images were not made to be sensational or to question the events, but to confirm them.

Nineteenth-century America was much less sophisticated than Europe at that time. In Europe craft and art were well known to those who had money as royalty traditionally had the privilege of having their images recorded. In democratic America the middle class had a limited contact with art, but yet there was still a great need to preserve images. The traditional avenues available to European royalty were not available to the American public.

When Daguerre announced his discovery in 1839, the process was accepted throughout the world faster than any such other previous discoveries had. In

America the daguerreotype process was accepted faster than in any other country. The Americans seemed to be suited for photography. Floyd and Marion Reinhart in their *America's Affluent Age* state:

Somehow or somewhere in America began a unique innovation—photographing the dead. For the first time the masses of the population were offered a means of preserving an exact image of their dead for posterity. The custom must have begun sometime in the early 1840's. It had no precedence in the history of man; it could not for photography itself was born in 1839. This innovation was strictly American and was widely practiced by American daguerreotypists.¹

It is interesting that the general body of death images in nineteenth-century America are photographic in comparison to the relatively few drawings and paintings dealing with death images. Most of the American paintings of that period were portraits, landscapes, or history paintings. A partial explanation for the choice of the photographic process for death images can be found in the idea of photographic truth and reality, which was accepted soon after the discovery of the photographic process, and in America's fascination for photography.

Another part of the explanation of the phenomenon of post mortum photography is classifying the images as part of a lengthy ritual of mourning. In

Wisconsin Death Trip Michael Lesy explains:

...it (guilt) results from a grotesque and sudden inversion of the natural order of death which leaves the parent to survive the child. In the presence of such disease, death, bereavement, and guilt, the countryside had elaborated a lengthy ritual of mourning that began with a florid public obituary, proceeded through a funeral designed to provide public witness and participation in the mourner's grief, and continued with the distribution of photographs of the dead prepared for burial. This ritual permitted the grieving parents to express and then accustom themselves to the irreversible facts of their children's death. By permitting them to be comforted by the whole town, it made them understand that no one was blaming them for their loss.²

The guilt felt because of this inversion is very important in understanding Lesy's ideas, and it can be further emphasized by a quote from the novel **The Grandmother's** by Glenway Wescott.

But when her daughter Flora died...this fortitude came to an end, and serenity gave way to despair. Death was acceptable twice during life: before it began in earnest, and after it was over. Little children died-death deprived them of nothing; their mothers were strong and could bear it. Those who were old belonged to death, as if by contract; she was willing that nature should take its course but the death of a lovely unmarried girl was intolerable and against nature. She herself should have been allowed to go instead; life had its way with her for more than half a century; she could have said amen.³

Post mortum images helped fit death's frightening aspects into a coherent system of values and prepared the people for their heritage as exemplified by the tradition of the family plot. The family plot was usually not parallel to or in front of the house, instead it was placed to the rear or adjacent to the home. This permitted the plot to be viewed from the kitchen, the room from which all activity revolved in the rural, nineteenth century.

This continual view of the family plot from the central room of the house gave the family members an overview in the knowledge of death being around, and it helped prepare the people for their heritage. The members of the family could envision their death, funeral, and burial, knowing that there was a place for themselves. They grew in the knowledge of these things being secure and true. In a similar fashion the death images exposed the people to death and helped fit death into a system of values that was less frightening.

As Michael Lesy pointed out the death images are part of an extended ritual of mourning and helped the mourners accustom themselves to the irreversible facts of death. This functional definition of mourning written by John Hinton, a psychiatrist, easily compliments Lesy's ideas.

It (mourning) insists that the death has occurred, repeatedly demonstrating this fact in various ways over a few days so that the bereaved, whatever their state of mind, accept the painful knowledge, assimilate it and can begin to plan accordingly. Viewing the body and taking part in the funeral emphasize beyond all doubt that the person is really dead. The condolences, discussion of the deceased in the past tense, the newspaper announcements, the public recognition of the death, (the death images), all affirm the loss.⁴

Nineteenth-century death images served two main purposes: Firstly they served as records for the all to frail human memory, and secondly they helped fit death into a system of values that helped the people accept the occurrence of death and comfort the bereaved. Perhaps it is because of these last functions of the death images combined with the taboo surrounding them, that make them so powerful and intense. The taboo that has surrounded the exhibition and psychological explanations dealing with these images has not been broken or explored until recently by such people as Michael Lesy and the Rinharts. This air of mystery and taboo has added to my appreciation of these powerful images. When photog-

A NEW KIND OF PICTORIAL HISTORY

Wisconsin Death Trip, by Michael Lesey. Pantheon Books, 1973, \$5.95 paper.

Though picture histories are nothing new, never has one like this appeared. Visually, the book is arresting, yet not as macabre as the funereal imagery might at first make it seem. Lesey works creatively with the prints, most of them from the Wisconsin Historical Society, by using their imperfections in suggestive ways, or more commonly, manipulating them into montages. Instead of providing captions for each image, or direct commentary on any image, Lesey provides abundant quotations from local publications of the time, as well as from period American writers, such as Hamlin Garland, Sinclair Lewis, and Edgar Lee Masters.

Clearly, though the book is a marvellous local history of Jackson County, Wisconsin, during the '90's, its real concerns lie more with the currents of American history. It seeks to explain the prevalence of suicide in a growing young nation noted for its wealth and optimism.

Several of the reasons were economic. The Nineties were years of slight depression, and the closing of the Frontier by about 1890 (when the last Indian uprisings were crushed) had definite social and economic consequences. These are among the central concerns of Garland's *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891), from which Lesey includes the following dialogue:

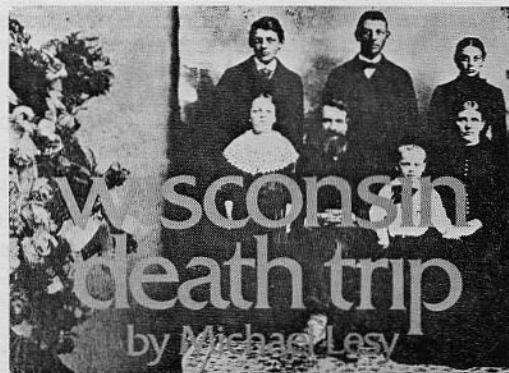
"Ten years ago Wes, here, could have got land in Dakota pretty easy, but now it's about all a feller's life's worth to try it. I tell you things seem shuttin down on us fellers."

"Plenty o' land to rent?" suggested someone.

"Yes, in terms that skin a man alive . . ."

By 1890, wealthy speculators from the cities had finished off the frontier, thereby reducing the chances that a person could always move West to get free land to work. But the hopes and dreams lingered on in the minds of millions, and when their expectations were not met, many fell into despair.

Another reason for the death trip of the Nineties



was the increasing urbanization of the country, and the resultant distaste for persons left behind in the country. In reviewing *Main-Travelled Roads*, William Dean Howells remarks that these stories "are full of those gaunt, grim, pathetic, ferocious figures, whom our satirists find so easy to caricature as Hayseeds and whose blind gropings for fairer conditions is so grotesque to the newspapers." Thus in less than a century the Jeffersonian ideal of the noble farmer had been reversed to become the hick from the boondocks.

In his "Conclusion" Lesey puts special emphasis on the psychological reasons for the epidemic of mental disturbance and suicide. The widespread paranoia—distrust of nearly everyone—stemmed in part from actual experience with untrustworthy authority figures such as politicians and preachers. Furthermore, America had not delivered on her promises, breeding additional distrust, especially among recent immigrants: "Once they realized that someone up there hadn't made a mistake, that they were poor and destitute for none of the good reasons they always believed to apply to such circumstances, then they understood that someone was lying to someone else. . ." And those who did not come to this recognition simply bore the sense of moral failure so often borne by America's poor.

Mr. Lesey has produced a new kind of book, one which is not merely pictorial, local, social history (though it is all of these), but a fascinating (though grotesque) collection of highly suggestive materials.

Paul W. Rea

Assistant Professor of English
University of Northern Colorado

HOW TO KNOW THE TRUE STATE OF OUR SOULS; AND WHETHER WE ARE FIT TO DIE

by John Mason

Lastly, the most important point of self-knowledge, after all, is, to know the true state of our souls towards god, and in what condition we are to die.

These two things are inseparably connected in their nature, and therefore I put them together. The knowledge of the former will determine it: for no man can tell whether he is fit for death, till he is acquainted with the true state of his own soul.

This, now, is a matter of such vast moment, that it is amazing any considerate man, or any who, thinks what it is to die, can be satisfied, so long as it remains an uncertainty. Let us trace out this important point, then, with all possible plainness; and see if we can come to some satisfaction in it, upon the most solid principles.

In order to know, then, whether we are fit to die, we must first know what it is that fits us for death. And the answer to this is very natural and easy; viz. that only fits us for death, which fits us for happiness after death.

This is certain. But the question returns. What is it that fits us for happiness after death.

This is certain. But the question returns. What it is that fits us for happiness after death?

Now, in answer to this, there is a previous question necessary to be determined; viz. What that happiness is!

It is not a fool's paradise, or a Turkish dream of sensitive gratifications. It must be a happiness suited to the nature of the soul, and what it is capable of enjoying in a state of separation from the body. And what can that be, but the enjoyment of god, the best of beings, and the author of ours!

The question then comes to this, what is that which fits us for the enjoyment of god, in the future state of separate spirits?

And methinks we may bring this matter to a very sure and short issue, by saying it is that which makes us like to him now. This only is our proper

qualification for the enjoyment of him after death, and therefore our only proper preparation for death. For how can they, who are unlike to god here, expect to enjoy him hereafter? And if they have no just ground to hope that they shall enjoy god in the other world, how are they fit to die?

So, that the great question, Am I fit to die? resolves itself into this, Am I like to god? for it is this only that fits me for heaven; and that which fits me for heaven, is the only thing that fits me for death.

Let this point, then, be well searched into, and examined very deliberately and impartially.

Most certain it is, that god can take no real complacency in any but those that are like him; and it is as certain, that none but those that are like him, can take pleasure in him. But god is a most pure and holy being; a being of infinite love, mercy and patience; whose righteousness is invariable, whose veracity inviolable, and whose wisdom unerring. There are the moral attributes of the divine being, in which he requires us to imitate him; the express lineaments of the divine nature, in which all good men bear a resemblance to him; and for the sake of which only, they are the objects of his delight: for god can love none but those that bear this impress of his own image on their souls. Do we find, then, these visible traces of the divine image there? Can we make out our likeness to him in his holiness, goodness, mercy, righteousness, truth, and wisdom? If so, it is certain we are capable of enjoying him, and are the proper objects of his love. By this we know we are fit to die; because by this we know we are fit for happiness after death.

Thus, then, if we are faithful to our consciences, and impartial in the examination of our lives and tempers, we may soon come to a right determination of this important question, What is the true state of our soul towards god; and in what condition we are to die? which, as it is the most important, so, is the last instance of self-knowledge I shall mention; and with it close the first part of this subject.

Nor do I apprehend the knowledge of our state (call it assurance, if you please) so uncommon and extraordinary a thing, as some are apt to imagine.

Understand, by assurance, a satisfactory evidence of the thing, such as excludes all reasonable doubts and disquieting fears of the contrary, though, it may be, not all transient suspicions and jealousies. And such an assurance and certainty multitudes have attained, and enjoy the comfort of; and indeed it is of so high importance, that it is a wonder any thoughtful Christian, that believes an eternity, can be easy one week or day without it. Benet's Christ Orat.

A Treatise on **Self-Knowledge** showing the nature and benefit of that important science and the way to attain it: intermixed with various reflections on observations on **Human Nature**. 1860, by John Mason, A.M.

THE LIFE CLOCK

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

There is a little mystic clock,
No human eye hath seen;
That beateth on—and beateth on,
From morning until e'en.

And when the soul is wrapped in sleep,
And heareth not a sound,
It ticks and ticks the livelong night
And never runneth down.

O wonderous is that work of art,
Which knells the passing hour,
But art ne'er formed, nor mind conceived,
The life-clock's magic power.

Not set in gold nor decked with gems,
By wealth and pride possessed;
But rich and poor, or high and low
Each bears it in his breast.

"Post-mortem Photography" continued

raphy dealt with death images in the nineteenth-century it was used as a recording device, but the general relationship of photography to the individual, which defined photography as a fundamental instinct of identification of one's self, was amplified into a more social function that deals with the energy that defined a society's values.

FOOTNOTES

1. Floyd and Marion Rinhart, *America's Affluent Age*, p. 323.
2. Michael Lesy, *Wisconsin Death Trip*.
3. Glenway Wescott, *The Grandmothers*, pp. 118-19
4. John Hinton, *Dying*, p. 187

When life's deep stream 'mid beds of flowers,
All still and softly glides,
Like the wavelet's step, with a gentle beat,
It warns of passing tides.

When threat'ning darkness gathers o'er,
And hope's bright visions flee,
Like the sullen stroke of the muffled oar,
It beateth heavily.

When passing nerves the warrior's arm
For deeds of hate and wrong,
Though heeded not the fearful sound,
The knell is deep and strong.

When eyes to eyes are gazing soft,
And tender words are spoken,
Then fast and wild it rattles on,
As if with love 'twere broken.

Such is the clock that measures life,
Of flesh and spirit blended;
And thus 'twill run within the breast,
Till that strange life is ended.

VICTORIAN DEATH IMAGE



4

Star Light, Star Bright, First Star I See Tonite.

Wish I may, Wish I might, have the wish I wish tonite.



5

THE HOUR IS COME

The hour is come—too soon it came—
 When you and I, fair girl, must sever;
 But though as yet be strange thy name,
 Thy memory will be loved for ever.
 We met as pilgrims on the way,
 Thy smiles made bright the gloomiest weather,
 Yet who is there can name the day
 When we shall meet again together!

Be that as 'twill, if ne'er to meet;
 At least we've had one day of gladness;
 And oh! a glimpse of joys more sweet,
 That it is seen through clouds of sadness.
 Thus did the sun—half hid to-day— Seem
 lovelier in its hour of gleaming, Than had we
 mark'd its fervid ray Through one untired
 day of beaming.

Seem lovelier in its hour of gleaming
 Than had we mark'd its fervid ray
 Through one untired day of beaming.



J. NELSON, DAGUERRBOTYP

6

THE DYING CHILD

"Is it not pretty? mother, say?
 Say quickly, ere I pass away,
 And talk no more with thee."
 "What, what, my child? for those bright eyes
 Do speak of something in the skies,
 Which mother cannot see."
 "Oh, it does beautiful appear!
 Can you not see it, mother dear?
 It is my pretty home."

So said my own dear lovely child,
 And grappled still with death;
 The cruel monster victor proved,
 And took away her breath.
 But when her spirit saw 'twas done,
 It took its happy flight;
 And soared up to the starry throne,
 There, there to find its pretty home,
 Where all is fair and bright.

M.R.A.

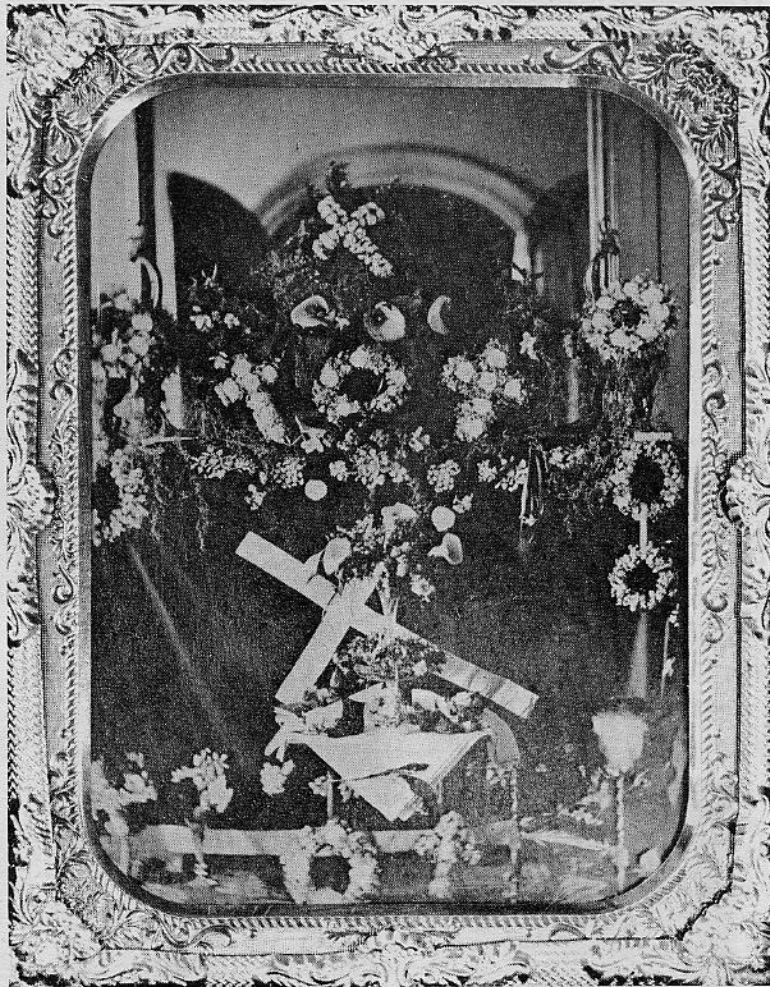
The Mothers' Journal and Family Visitant,
 Feb. 1846



7



8



9

TO A DEPARTED FRIEND

Forgive, blest shade, the tributary tear,
That mourns thine exit from a world like this;
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,
And stayed by progress to the seats of bliss.

No more confined to grovelling scenes of night,
No more a tenant kept in mortal clay,
Now should we rather hail thy glorious flight,
And trace thy journey to the realms of day.



10

—” Death!, strange death!
 We cannot scan thee—thou dost steal
 Among us like a noiseless breath—
 We see not—hear not—but we *feel!*?”



11



THE DEAD CHILD

Death has been here, but night and day
 The tearful mother still is keeping
 Her solitary watch for aye,
 By him who cannot hear her weeping.

She has forgot the parting sigh,
 That seem'd to burst his heaving bosom;
 The shade that came o'er cheek and eye,
 Like evening o'er the rose's blossom;

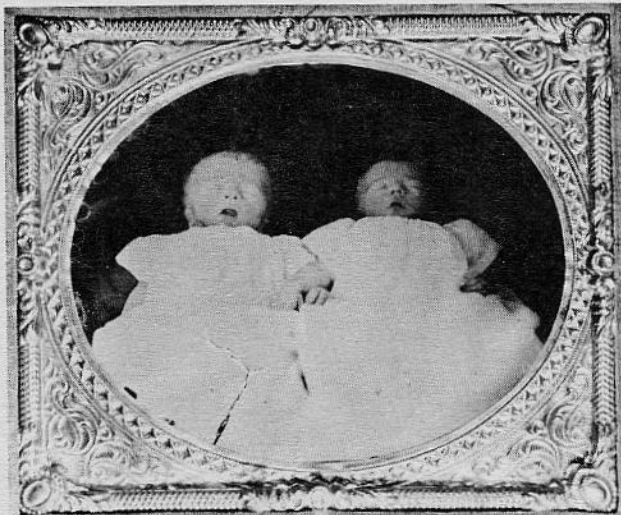
For hark! she prays with upward look,
 That heaven may heal her child again;
 She reads, aloud, his story book,
 And weeps that it is all in vain.

12

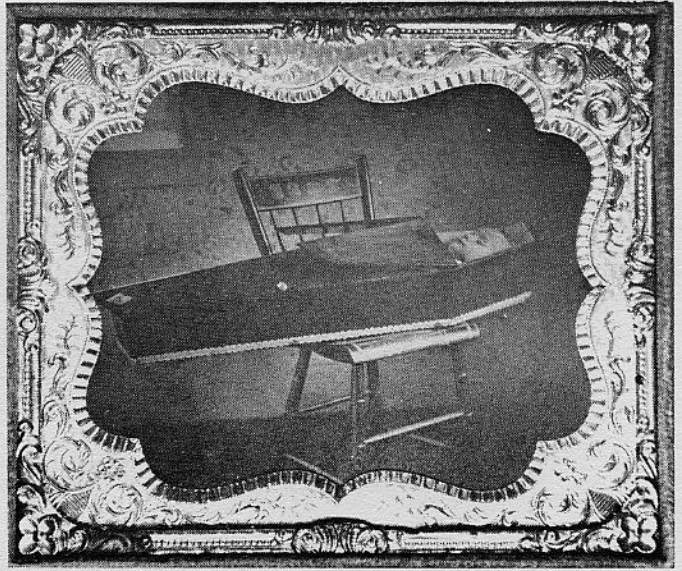
Nor would you marvel, had you seen
 The calm sweet smile for ever welling,
 As 'twere from out a soul serene,
 Where thoughts of happiness were dwelling,

How the one mother of the boy
 Should half forget, when he was lying,
 Like cherub in his smileless joy,
 That she so late had seem him dying.

I pass'd his grave but yesterday,
 And emblem flowers were on its springing—
 Lilies and roses—and her lay,
 The linnet, from the trees, was singing.



13

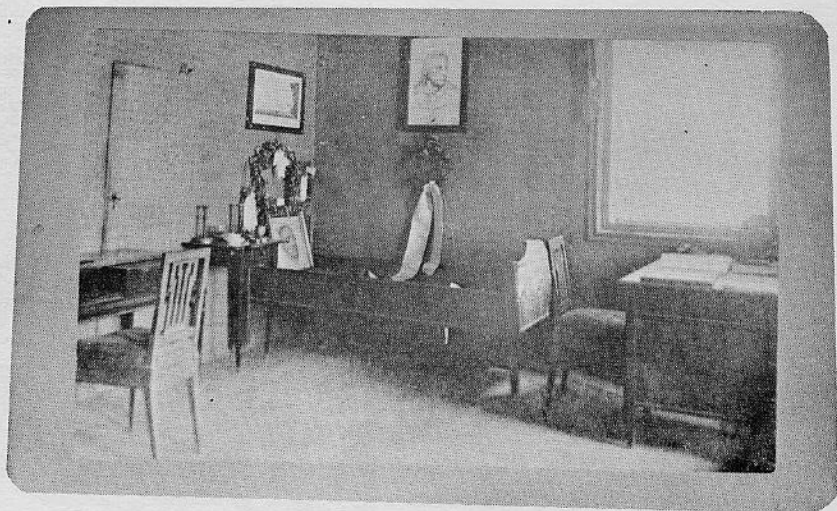


14

To wake the silent sleepers up,
To meet the judgment day;
Whether upon the mountain's top,
Or in the lowly sea.



15



16



Drainard & Rome, N.Y.

17



A. G. Emery,

EAST TAWAS,
MICH.

THE CHILD'S DREAM

BY JAMES BALDRY

O, Mother, Mother! such a dream as I have had
to-night,

Such fields—such flowers— such bright array— and
such a heavenly light!

Methought, as slumbering on my bed—a mighty angel
came,

His eyes were stars, his vest was gold, his wings were
tipt with flame.

He hung above me, mother, yes, as erst my father did,
Before they bore him far away, beneath the coffin
lid,

And tender were the words he spoke, and beauteous
every flower,

He bound around my beaming brow in that en-
raptured hour.

O, Mother, once methought his face looked liked my
father's did,

But then the tears crept to my eyes, that were before
so clear,

“Up, lilies, up,” he softly said, and far away he flew,
By clouds and stars, and rosy bowers, all silvered o'er
with dew.

And up, and up, we went, and still the stars were
everywhere,

And mild and murmuring music rolled along the
balmy air,

And oh! I wist not of the change, so sudden and so
bright,

But, mother dear, I stood before a throne of beaming
light.

And angel forms, in thousands stood, in robes of
brilliant sheen,

Sweet hymns and songs of joy they sung, and struck
their harps between,

And then methought that angel bright did beckon me
away,

To where there sat a little child as lovely as the day!

And, mother! twas our little one for whom you wept
so much,

I ran to clasp him in my arms, but could not feel his
touch;

His cheeks were like the blooming rose, his hair was
silver bright,

His lips were rubies set in pearl, magnificently white.

He said “why does my mother stay so long away
from me,

Here is my sire, and thou art here, but where, oh,
where is she?”

I turned to see my father's face, but he had soared
away;

My, brother, too, was gone, and I upon my pillow
lay.

Now, mother, ponder well my dream, the meaning
tell to me,

And I will be a loving child and tender unto thee.

“Alas!” the weeping mother said, “thy dream I well
may know,—

All, all are gone but thee alone, and now thou too
must go.”

And so it was—that gentle child pined, sickened,
drooped and died,

They laid her in her brother's grave her lonely
mother's pride;

And oft the matron's waking hours renew that
solumn theme,

And prayers are sighed, and tears are shed, upon her
infant's dream.

“KISS ME, MAMMA.”

The child was so sensitive, so like that little shrinking plant that curls at a breath, and shuts its heart from the light!

The only beauties she possessed were an exceedingly transparent skin, and the most mournful, large blue eyes.

I had been trained by a very stern, strict, conscientious mother, but I was a hardy plant, rebounding after every shock. Misfortune could not daunt, though discipline trained me. I fancied, alas! that I must go through the same routine with this delicate creature; so one day when she had displeased me exceedingly by repeating an offense, I was determined to punish her severely. I was very serious all day, and upon sending her to her little couch, I said:

“Now, my daughter, to punish you, and show you how very naughty you have been, I shall not kiss you to-night.”

She stood looking at me, astonishment personified, with her mournful eyes wide open—I supposed she had forgotten her misconduct till then, and I left her with big tears dropping down her cheeks and her little red lips quivering.

Presently I was sent for. “Oh, mamma you will kiss me, I can’t go to sleep if you don’t!” she sobbed, every tone of her voice trembled, and she held out her little hands.

Now came the struggle between love and what I falsely termed duty. My heart said, “give her the kiss of peace;” my stern nature urged me to persist in my correction, that I might impress the fault upon her mind. That was the way I had been trained till I was a most submissive child, and I remembered how I had often thanked my mother since for her straightforward course.

I knelt by the bedside. “Mother can’t kiss you, Ellen,” I whispered, though every word choked me. Her hand touched mine; it was very hot, but I attributed it to her excitement. She turned her little grieving face to the wall. I blamed myself as the fragile form shook with half-suppressed sobs, and saying, “Mother hopes little Ellen will learn to mind her after this,” left the room for the night. Alas! in my desire to be severe, I forgot to be forgiving.

It must have been twelve o’clock when I was awakened by my nurse. Apprehensive, I ran eagerly to the child’s chamber. I had had a fearful dream.

Ellen did not know me. She was sitting up, crimsoned from forehead to throat, her eyes so bright that I almost drew back aghast at their glances.

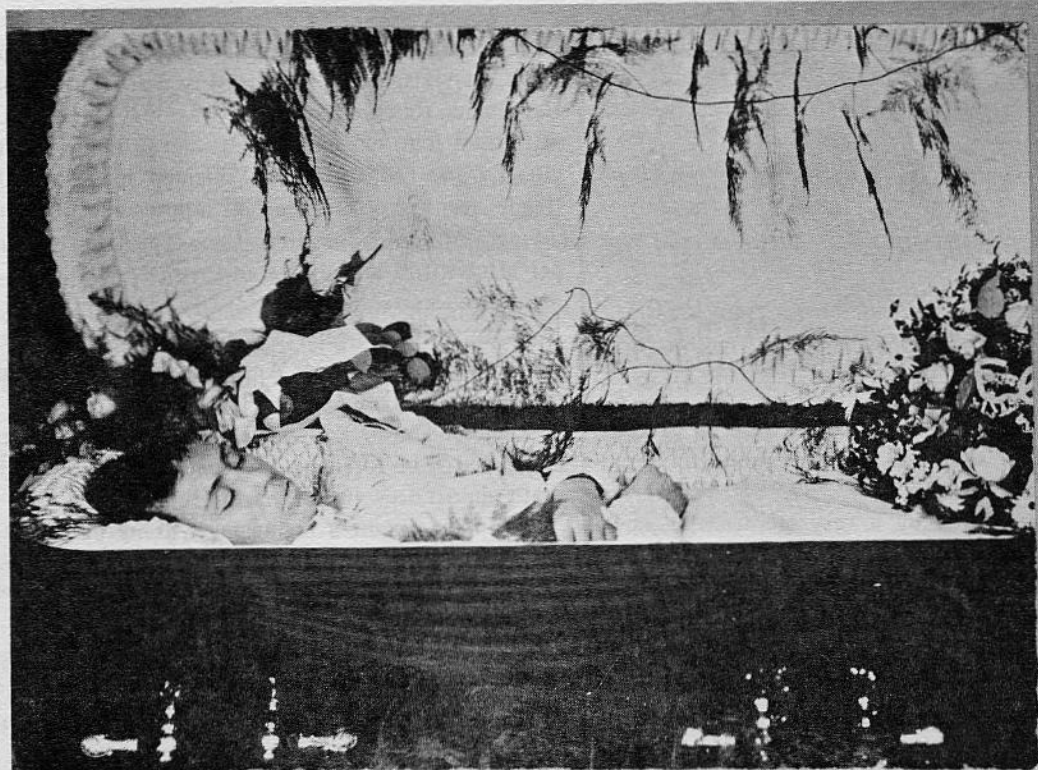
From that night a raging fever drank up her life, and what think you was the incessant plaint that poured unto my anguished heart?

“Oh, kiss me, mamma, do kiss me; I can’t go to sleep! You’ll kiss your little Ellen, mamma, won’t you? I can’t go to sleep. I won’t be naught if you’ll kiss me! Oh, kiss me, dear mamma, I can’t go to sleep.”

Holy little angel! She did go to sleep one gray morning, and she never woke again, never. Her hand was locked in mine, and my veins grew icy with its gradual chill. Faintly the light faded out of the beautiful eyes, whiter and whiter grew the temulous lips. She never knew me, but with her last breath she whispered, “I will be good, mamma, if you’ll kiss me.”

Kiss her! God knows how passionate, but unavailing were my kisses upon her cheek and lips after that fatal night. God knows how I would have given up my very life could I have asked forgiveness of that sweet child.

Well, grief is unavailing now! She lies in her little tomb; there is a marble urn at her head, and a rosebush at her feet; there grow sweet summer flowers, there waves the gentle grass; there birds sing their matins and vespers; there the blue sky smiles down to-day, and there lies buried the freshness of my heart.



G. W. W. W. W. W. W.

19

PREMATURE BURIAL.

Not less than five or six authenticated cases have been reported in newspapers, within the last year, in which it has been discovered from subsequent appearances that a person has been buried before death occurred, or one laid aside for dead has been restored. As the treatment of the dying and the dead ordinarily takes place in the family circle, and is liable to devolve upon any person, correct views on the subject ought to be entertained by those who have the management of families, and ought to be generally imparted. Hence its appropriateness in these pages.

In some parts of this country, the dead are buried with indecorous haste. When no necessity, arising from the state of the weather, or peculiar circumstances in the case, obliges persons to hurry the remains of their deceased friends into the grave, one would judge that human feelings would dictate all

practicable delay. And in addition to the unwillingness which it would seem that friends must feel to bestow the last look upon what has been precious to them, and to put away the loved form forever, a desire to avoid premature burial—burial before life is extinct—ought to insure any reasonable postponement of interment.

But burying persons who are still alive is not probably of so frequent occurrence, as the extinction of life by treating people as dead, when they are only apparently so, from the effects of an injury, or the sudden attack or severe crisis of disease. When people have wasted away under the slow, sure ravages of consumption, there is little danger of making such a mistake in regard to them. But when apparent death occurs suddenly, or in acute, violent diseases, great caution should be used lest death should be caused by the treatment which supposes it to have already taken place.

In cases of sudden injury, all manifestation of life is sometimes suspended, even when the subject is conscious of all that is passing. I well knew a lady who more than forty years ago, was thrown from a carriage and very seriously injured. For several minutes after the accident occurred, she was thought to be dead. She could hear the by-standers say that she was dead, and yet could give no token of life.—A gentleman of my acquaintance was apparently killed by lightning. He understood the conversation around him, and heard himself pronounced to be dead, and could not for some time make any demonstration to the contrary.

In the crisis of a violent disease, life often wavers and flickers, and is on the verge of extinction. Sometimes all consciousness and animation seems to have fled. At long intervals a quivering of the chin denotes something like a breath; or an occasional tremor is just perceptible, as a token that the motion of the heart is not altogether stilled. Let the interval between these feeble gaspings or pulsations be somewhat prolonged—the last glimmer of life, it is supposed, is extinguished. The eyes of the supposed deceased friend are closed. The chin is bound up, that the features may not become distorted and unnatural. The face, perhaps, is soon covered. Air, it may be, is excluded. And ere long such movements and arrangements of the body may be made as to contribute to the final cessation of all the processes of life, and death actually takes place.—A young girl once lay in this critical situation, passing through the crisis of a terrible fever. An occasional slight motion of the chin was all that manifested life; and whenever her mother turned from her bedside for a moment, she feared that she had seen even this token for the last time. All hope of revival to consciousness in her child was abandoned. After some time, prompted by a mother's anxiety, and yet with no expectation of benefit, she applied to the temples, face, and chest of the child a powerful stimulant which had been prepared for another sufferer, and happened to be at hand. The powers of life rallied; the child breathed, spoke, recovered, and lives to relate the circumstances as a lesson to others.

An acquaintance of mine who now goes forth to his business among men was, a few months ago, reduced by violent disease to the last extremity, and laid many days in an apparently dying state. Twice or three times a hand was placed over his eyes to close them forever, so convinced were his friends that life had ceased. How slight a cause might then have extinguished its feeble flickerings.

I have no delight in detailing the horrible or the marvellous; but for the purpose of showing the occasion which exists for caution in this matter, and to make a strong impression upon the minds of readers, I will give some further facts which have come to my knowledge with the most undoubted evidence.

In a town in Massachusetts were my early childhood was spent, a lady died suddenly, with only a few hours illness. The weather was extremely warm, and an early burial was thought necessary. She was interred the day following her death. A few years afterwards, her husband built a tomb, and had her remains taken up to be placed in it. Some friendly neighbors assisting on the occasion, opened the coffin, and found the body had turned itself on one side.

A physician of great respectability and extensive practice, well known in our family for many years as a friend and practitioner, related the following circumstance. A young man belonging to an obscure family in the outskirts of the town in which both my parents and the physician resided, was sick, but not alarmingly so. Dr. P. did not think it necessary to visit him oftener than once in two days. On his arrival at the house at one time, he was told by the father of the young man that he was too late, that his son had just died. The doctor was surprised—he had not expected such an event. He stopped a short time to manifest some respect for the affliction of the family, and although usually indisposed to view a corpse, he requested to see this one, probably from the feeling of surprise which the unexpected death had caused him. He looked at the body, and was led to suspect that there was life. Immediately means of recovery were used; and when the physician left the house the

young man was able to converse. But Dr. P. said that he never would have revived, had not the discovery been thus early made.

Another fact occurred in the same town, which almost transcends belief. I have repeatedly heard the particulars related by my parents. My older sister also recollected the circumstance, although a young child at the time of its occurrence. The place was New Ipswich, N.Y. A girl about eleven years of age, named Clarissa Fox, who had been for a time in declining health, suddenly became worse, and died, to all appearance. The day following, at about the same hour in which her decease took place, a faint color was seen to tinge her cheek. This led to efforts to produce re-animation. Day after day passed. Every means was used that could be devised for the purpose—cold baths, warm baths, friction, blood-letting, blistering, etc. Food was administered in enemas, as were also medicines calculated to act powerfully upon the system. But not the least apparent effect was produced. No manifestation of life appeared, except in the daily return of that faint tinge of color upon the cheek; and this regularly appeared at a certain period in every day. My father visited the child on the *twenty-ninth day* after she went into this state. Her appearance was in every respect that of a corpse. Of course, there was no decomposition; but there was every other demonstration of death. Several days later—my mother thinks four or five, which would extend the time to the thirty-third or thirty-fourth day—at the usual period of the return of slight color to her cheek, the girl revived, and was restored to consciousness and speech. The chain in which she had been so long bound was broken. But there was not sufficient vigor remaining in the system for permanent recovery. Nature was exhausted. She did not appear to have been conscious of the lapse of time, or of her late condition, but said she was very sick, and should die—that she was willing to die, and should go to Jesus. She lived about an hour, and then expired.

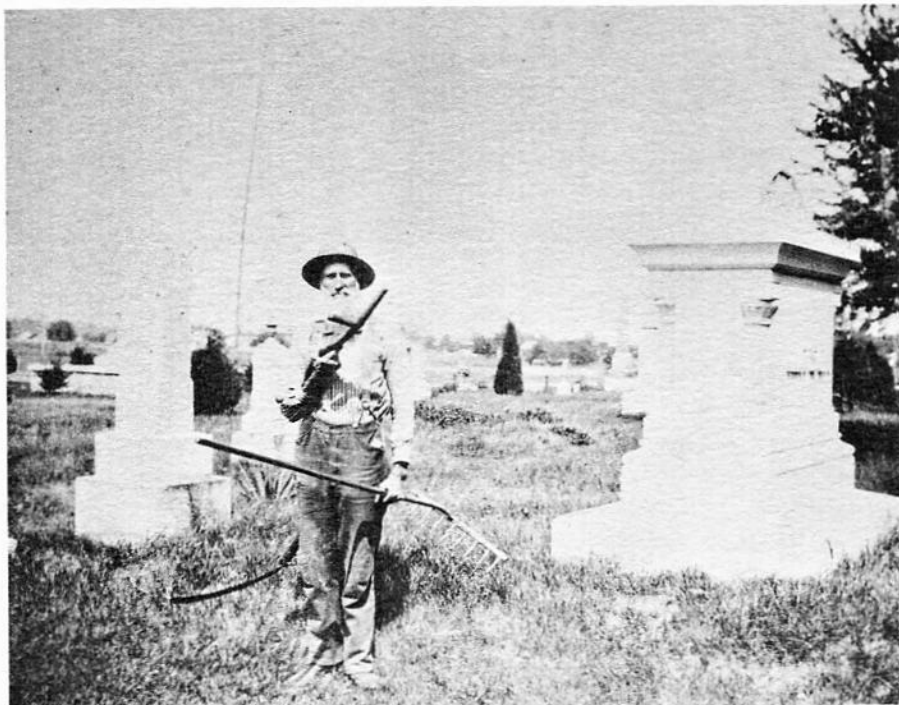
I have given names and sources of information in the above narration, because the seeming incredibility of the story demands it. I suppose the event occurred

in 1801 or 1802, as my father, I have been told, removed from the town in 1803. Much earlier than that, my sister would not have been old enough to recollect the circumstance.

The fact of the great length of time during which this girl lay apparently dead, should be a warning never to yield up a subject for burial, so long as *the least indication* of life remains, and will stimulate friends to the *persevering* use of means while such indications exist, however faint. The restoration of Rev. William Tennant to life and health, after he had been apparently dead three or four days, and his friends had been more than once convened for his funeral, is a well-known fact. Even his own brother was so convinced that he was dead, that he became impatient at what he thought the folly of the physician in his pertinacious attempts to restore animation. Be not hasty in judging persons to be dead. Do not bury them until it is absolutely certain that life is extinct. And if there is a shade of a suspicion that they are not actually dead, do not extinguish.

The Mothers' Journal and Family Visitant, June 1846



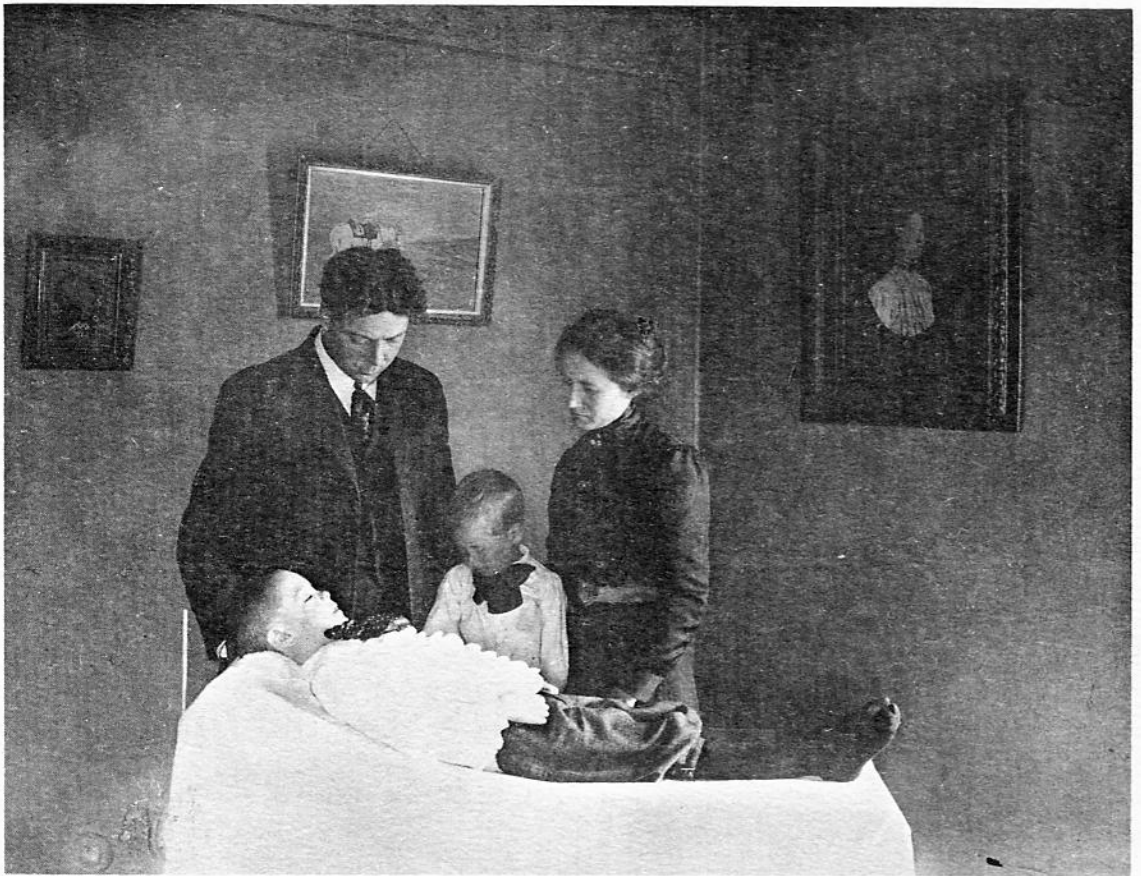


21

Egra B. Warner, 1829-1900, Sexton at McComb, Ohio Cemetery

Photo Credits:

- 1 - Daguerreotype 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W.A. Johnson collection.
- 2 - Ambrotype 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W.A. Johnson collection.
- 3 - Carte-de-Visite, H. Friedmann, Photographer, Stratford, W. A. Johnson collection.
- 4 - Cabinet card, Russell, photographer, Blossburg, Pa., W. A. Johnson collection
- 5 - Daguerreotype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 6 - Daguerreotype, 1/6 plate, F. Nelson, photographer, W. A. Johnson, collection
- 7 - Daguerreotype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 8 - Daguerreotype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 9 - Ambrotype, 1/2 plate, photographer unknown, Matt Isenberg collection
- 10 - Ambrotype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 11 - Ambrotype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 12 - Tintype, 1/4 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 13 - Tintype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection.
- 14 - Tintype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 15 - Tintype, 1/4 plate, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 16 - Carte-de-Visite, Ed. Lobe's Wwe. W. A. Johnson collection
- 17 - Cabinet card, F. M. Brainerd, photographer, Rome, N. Y., W. A. Johnson collection
- 18 - Cabinet card, A. G. Emery, photographer, East Tawas, Mich., W. A. Johnson collection
- 19 - Cabinet card, Frees, photographer, Tiffin, Ohio, W. A. Johnson collection
- 20 - Ambrotype, 1/6 plate, photographer unknown, Donald P. Lokuta collection
- 21 - Albumin print, 4x5 inches, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection
- 22 - Dry plate negative, 5x7 inches, photographer unknown, W. A. Johnson collection



22

The new Daguerreian Journal is published by the Publications Committee, The Ohio State University Libraries, 1858 Neil Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43210. Published quarterly at an annual rate of \$10.00, single copies \$2.50 each, and \$15.00 foreign subscription (excluding Canada).